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ABSTRACT

Research indicates that leaders tend to be remarkably well-balanced people who embody four areas of competency: vision, the ability to communicate that vision, positive self-regard, and the ability to build trust with associates. The process of creating a vision of the future requires an understanding of the opportunities and threats present in the external environment, and of the strengths and weaknesses characterizing the internal environment. The technology of strategic planning and management, including both internal audit and external assessment, offers a model for developing this requisite understanding. Developing a vision of the future also requires a commitment to key concepts about the study of the future and a planning horizon. By tracing the development of social systems (e.g., business and industry, health and human services, government and military, and education and training) through the post-industrial, early technical, and advanced technical phases of society, one can begin to specify possible, probable, and preferable futures. These visions and preferred scenarios must then be transformed into a multi-year plan of action. The ability to implement this plan requires that the planning, research, and development function of a college be located near the top of the organizational structure in order to assist the chief executive officer in creating a long-term vision for the institution. (RO)

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LEADERSHIP: VISION & STRUCTURE

by
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About the Author

Warren H. Groff is in his ninth year at North Central Technical College. He was Vice President for Academic Affairs for seven years and is now Director of Research and Development.

He has written extensively on the topics of human resources development and strategic planning and management for economic development. He has made numerous presentations at state and national conferences including the American Vocational Association and the American Association for Community and Junior Colleges. He chaired the statewide Task Force on High Technology for the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents during 1982-83, and served on the OBR Computer Task Force and the OBR Higher Education Telecommunications Committee in 1983-84. In 1984 he chaired a 44-member Consolidation Committee for School Improvement for the Board of Education of the Mansfield City Schools. He served as secretary, vice president and president of the Ohio Technical and Community College Association Council of Instructional Officers.

Dr. Groff was one of two faculty at the Snowmas Institution on Strategic Planning and Management in 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1985. He assisted in conducting an American Council on Education Leadership Seminar on "Strategic Planning Techniques for Massachusetts Post-secondary Education" for the newly created Massachusetts Board of Regents in December 1981. He teaches "Personnel - Human Resources Development", "Governance and Management", and "The Emergence of Vocational, Technical, Occupational Education in America" in Nova University's Higher Education Programs. He is completing a two-year term as president of the College of Education Alumni Society of The Pennsylvania State University.

Sometimes institutions are simply the sum of the historical accidents that happen to them: like the sands in the desert they are shaped by influences but not by purposes. Men and women can shape their institutions to suit their purposes provided that they are not too gravely afflicted with the diseases of which institutions die - among them: complaisance, myopia, and unwillingness to choose.

John W. Gardner

LEADERSHIP

Research indicates that leaders tend to be remarkably well-balanced people who embody four areas of competency: (1) vision (2) the ability to communicate that vision, (3) positive self-regard, and (4) building trust with associates.[1] Many leaders are passionate dreamers who have deeply-felt convictions about what should be achieved by individuals or through institutions of society.

In addition, successful leaders have learned how to communicate their visions to others and inspire participation, sometimes conviction, in the achievement of that vision. The ability to communicate implies being articulate in a number of verbal and non-verbal ways, as well as being able to design and implement a way to guide an institution or system through a process that will help make that vision a reality. That process includes resources development.

Positive self-image contributes to the process by helping leaders to become aware of their own capabilities and limitations. In so doing they become more tolerant of the mistakes and feelings of others. If leaders acquire the first three competencies, they may be able to begin building trust with associates. Only through vision, communications, and positive self-regard, will leaders have confidence to share the power with their colleagues.

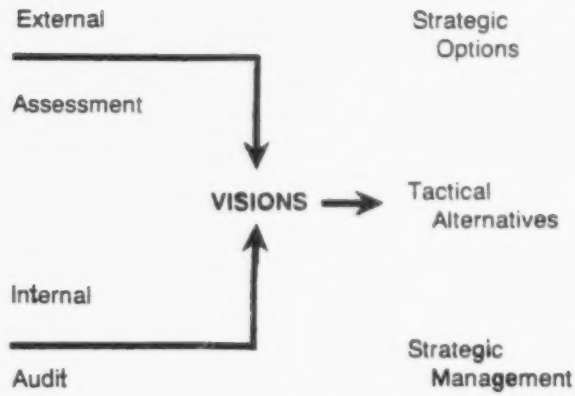
VISION (ENDS)

Strategic Planning and Management

Although the technology of strategic planning and management has been used for years in business and industry and by the federal government and the military, it is still in the early stages of adoption in postsecondary educaiton. This technology for institutional advancement is based upon (1) a comprehensive assessment of the external environment of the institution's service area, (2) a critical analysis or audit of an institution's internal environment, (3) the development of visions and alternative scenarios based on the assessment of the external environment and the internal environment, (4) the selection of strategic options, (5) refinement of the strategic options into tactical alternatives, and (6) the specification and management of strategy to assist the institution advance toward the preferred scenario.[2] The basic model for strategic planning and management is displayed in FIGURE 1.

FIGURE 1

BASIC MODEL FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT



The external environment includes demographic trends, economic trends, political change, technological advances, changes in the workplace, communications and information technologies, social indicators, value shifts and numerous other variables. The purpose of assessing the external environment is to identify **opportunities** and **threats.**

The internal audit has a focus on mission, goals and objectives, governance structure, programs, students and student services, learning and learning resources, faculty and teaching, equipment, facilities, finances, organization and administration, and outcomes - output of the department or college and impact on the group it is intended to serve. The purpose of the internal audit is to identify **strengths** and **weaknesses** in institutional culture, efficiency, effectiveness, functioning, and strategy.

Institutions of postsecondary education are accustomed to doing a reasonably adequate job with the internal audit, primarily because of reaffirmation of accreditation. During the past several years post secondary education has improved its capability for assessing the external environment. We will maximize the benefits of the use of the technology of strategic planning and management only if we can improve our assessment and audit techniques and then create images, visions, and scenarios of the future.

Conceptual Framework

Alvin Toffler states, "All education springs from some image of the future." The challenge to us as advocates of reform in education and training is (1) to develop a vision of the future and (2) to translate that vision of the future into a scope of work. To deal with that challenge it requires (1) a commitment to key concepts about the study of the future and (2) a planning horizon.

There are several key concepts in studying the future. First, the future is not fixed or preordained. Numerous alternative futures are possible. Imagination and creativity are essential in developing artistic composites of alternative futures. Second, studying the future involves forecasts of alternatives: (1) what can be - probable; and (3) what should be - preferable. Third, our orientation and training work against the development of vivid visions of alternative futures. We are encumbered by the way in which we were programmed into the society of which we are a part, the disciplines and universe of knowledge we have been exposed to and understand, and the practices and procedures we have succumbed to as we institutionalized the teaching tasks of an industrial society.

With regard to a planning horizon, we could set our sights on the year 2020. Why 2020? First, 2020 creates a positive image. When a physician or friend indicates you have 20/20 vision, you immediately think in terms of clear focus, sharp definition, and a feeling of certainty. Second, from a human resources planning perspective, persons now going through undergraduate programs or in their early professional development will still be working in the education and training industry in the year 2020. Third, from a physical plant and fiscal resources planning perspective, facilities we create will be a part of the learning environment for the next 30 to 50 years.

Now we must develop a framework for developing our images, visions, and scenarios. Begin by arraying periods of time across the horizontal axis and systems down the vertical axis of a sheet of paper. Label the period 1955 to 1985 the "early postindustrial society," the period of time from 1985 through 2000 the "early technical society," and the period from 2000 to 2020 the "advanced technical society." Systems could include business and industry, health and human services, government and military, education and training, or a specific listing of types of establishments and institutions. (See FIGURE 2). Now begin to list changes that have occurred in the post-industrial society and specify possible, probable, and preferrable futures.

Business and Industry

The basic unit for batch manufacturing is a machine with an operator. The role of the worker is to operate the machine by manually adjusting buttons, dials, handwheels, and levers; the machine usually has some sort of electric or hydraulic power. The next advance is electronic intelligence in the form of computer control to run the machine accurately, consistently, and repeatedly, through a complicated series of operations. Currently the item moves on a journey from machine to machine to be processed from raw material to part to component to finished product. The journey takes a long time because the item produced spends 95 percent of the time as inventory standing in line, waiting, or in transit from machine to machine. New technologies such as computers and robots offer opportunities for automating the process.

The transition from today's practice to a fully computer integrated manufacturing process will take a considerable amount of time. State-of-the-art technology is fragmented and consists of individual computer aided functions that provide greater speed, efficiency, accuracy, and repeatability for the individual tasks. Data bases are not uniform throughout the series of manufacturing operations. In the factory of the future, computer aided machines will be sequenced together with automatic handling and transport of materials as they make the journey from raw material to finished product.

Corporations must utilize state-of-the-art technology in order to remain competitive with domestic and international competition. To adopt and use contemporary technology requires corporations to train their human resources in vendor-specific technology. This type of training is sometimes provided by vendors in distant places at great costs to the corporation. The instruction is often at the engineering level and assumes extensive background and understanding. Sometimes the focus is on theory as opposed to application. In additon, technical manuals and operating manuals sometimes do not exist and are often written above the level of current employees. In many instances there is limited or no service on the part of the vendor to assist the employee use the didactic instruction in the workplace environment, thereby resulting in loss of efficiency and effectiveness.

Health and Human Services

The health care delivery system has benefited greatly from advances in science and technology, particularly advances in communications and computer technology. Several years ago communications and computer technologies were used primarily for administrative purposes. Today, these technologies are being used for client records and direct and indirect service to patients. For example, client records can be stored on the mainframe with the information distributed throughout the hospital via an internal network of terminals to nursing stations, the laboratory, the pharmacy, and to physicians' offices via an external network. A test sample can be analyzed in the lab and the results entered into the system. The physician can look at the results on the terminal in her/his office and order medications from the pharmacy. Results of medications and vital signs information can be entered into the system by the nurse and other service providers. After the patient is discharged, the patient's record is updated from the physician's office, from the patient's home by the visiting nurse, or from any community-based service provider.

FIGURE 2

	1955	1985	2000	2020
	Post-Industrial Society	Early Technical Society	Advanced Technical Society	
Business and Industry				
Health and Human Service				
Government and Military				
Education and Training				

Government and Military

During the reform movement of the post-Sputnik era, the Federal government allocated considerable money to improve education. Today, Federal spending on education is 2.0% of the total budget — $15.4 billion. Several persons believe the Federal era in higher education has clearly ended, particularly with the Gramm-Rudman amendment.

With regard to political process, 76,565 persons serve the 50 states as elected officials. For the most part, they are citizen legislators who work most-time at various trades and professions in their home communities and part-time as law makers in state capitals. In addition, there are hundreds of commissions, committees, and task forces at work analyzing societal problems and submitting recommendations about courses of action. It is important to keep tabs on issues, people and processes. Postsecondary education needs to know where the issue is in its development life cycle.

With regard to the military, the Army Logistics Management Center has designed an electronic instructional network to meet its increased training needs. The system is a one-way video, two-way audio delivery system for satellite broadcast, two-way graphic or data, and two-way audio for electronic blackboard transmission. Other branches of the military have similar types of systems to meet their training needs. What issues do our schools and colleges need to address relative to government and the military?

Education and Training

During the industrial society schools were designed to produce compliant children who would do what they were given to do, who would be very comfortable working at a conveyor belt and who didn't object to being treated like a piece on a conveyor belt as their cognitive, psychomotor, and attitudinal skills were assembled for them in a "school." They were batch processed through eight to twelve years of compulsory education and training. Schools and colleges were designed primarily like broadcast television—education and training services were delivered in uniform packages and in a manner and at a time convenient to the provider.

Some changes have occurred in our schools and colleges by advances in basic and applied research, by legislative fiat, by innovative leaders and risk takers, by "customer" dissatisfaction, and by social and economic forces of national and international proportions. Leslie, Cetron, and Niebuhr discuss visions of education in the future. [3] Leslie uses Toffler's **The Third Wave** technical society to set the stage for planning for the electronic institution. Cetron uses a number of already well-established trends as a basis for discussing the school fo the future. Niebuhr calls on all the mainstream institutions to rethink the way we manage the learning tasks of an advanced society as a way to create a new Information Age Paradigm — learning communities.

Multi-Year Plan of Action

Ultimately, visions and preferred scenarios must be transformed into a multi-year plan of action. Goals and objectives should be specified relative to WHAT is to be accomplished for primary programs, support programs, and capital planning. The plan of action should include strategy — **HOW, WHEN, WHO.** See FIGURE 3. An institution can then manage strategically.

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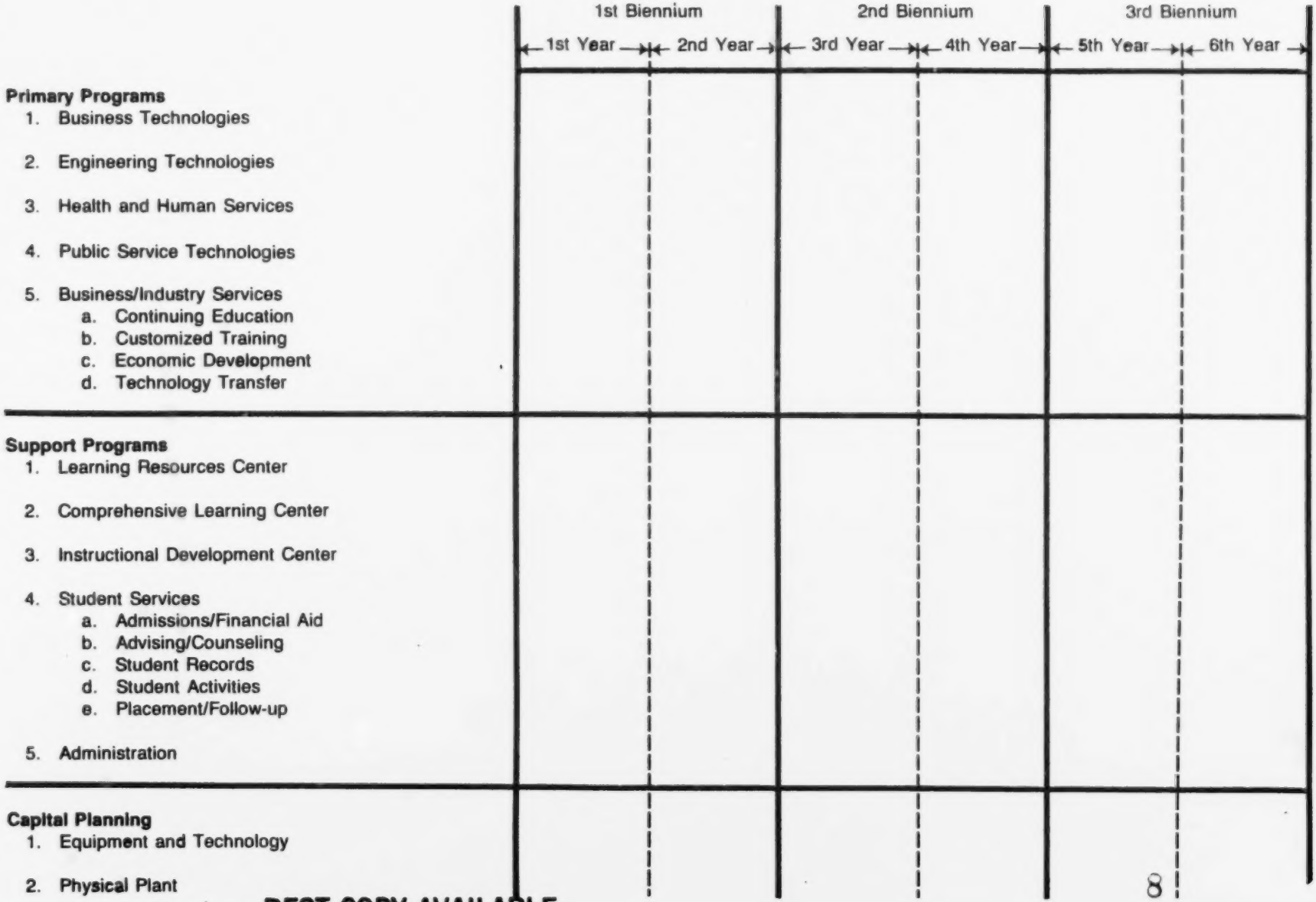
FIGURE 3

MULTI-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION



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STRUCTURE (MEANS)

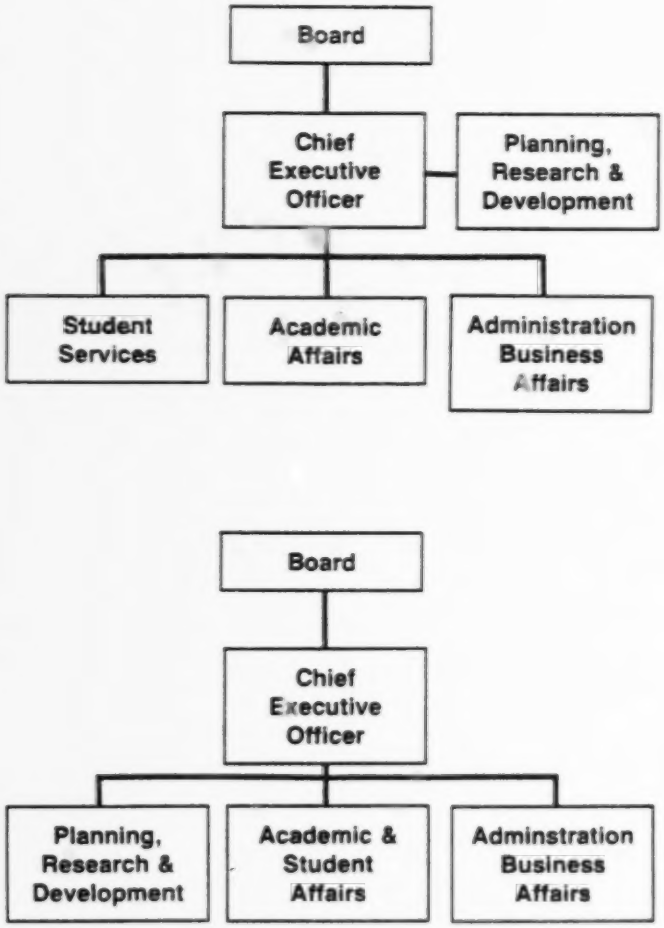
All organizations pass through various stages of growth and development. These stages can be labeled emergence, growth, and maturity. Most two-year institutions are still in the early stages of growth and development. In addition, most two-year colleges have less than 2000 students. Regardless of stage of maturity or size, all institutions must deal with the functions of planning, research, and development. The issue is how to institutionalize these functions in order to derive maximum return on investment.

Boards have three primary functions: (1) to approve the mission and essential purposes of the institution, (2) to hire the chief executive officer to carry out the mission and essential purpose, and (3) to acquire the resources to fulfill that role in society. Because most Boards will expect the chief executive officer to provide leadership in creating the long-term vision and multi-year plan of action, it seems logical to locate the coordinating responsibility for the functions of planning, research, and development near the top of the organizational structure.

It is important to discuss the functions of planning, research, and development. Planning can be labeled strategic and operational. All persons do a certain amount of operational planning. It has a focus on what to do tommorrow, next week, or next term. Strategic planning deals with creating visions, developing preferred scenarios, and translating those images into multi-year plans of action. Purposeful human activity is maximized when these two types of planning are synchronized. Research can focus on the external environment or the internal environment. Strategic directions require considerable data based on sound market research. Development would include grantsmanship and fund raising activities, annual and capital.

Two frequently used patterns of organizational structure are displayed in FIGURE 4. In both patterns, the three functions are coordinated by the same office, possibly the same person in small institutions. In the first pattern, the chief executive officer takes primary responsibility for these functions with support from a staff person. In the second pattern, the Office of PRD has primary responsibility for coordinating these functions for the president. Many institutions have recognized the primacy of these three functions and are shifting toward an Office of PRD.

FIGURE 4
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



CONCLUSION

The recent batch of reports on education all agree that the quality of our education and training system must be improved, and improved now. This education reform movement acknowledges the enormous primacy of education and training — learning is the capital forming industry of an advanced society. If we are to be the beneficiaries of the technical society, we must rethink the way we manage the learning tasks of an advanced society — we must create visions of preferred scenarios and then develop a multi-year scope of work to which we can link purposeful human activity and other resources. Walt Disney captures the essence in his statement, "If you can draw it, you can do it."

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FOOTNOTES

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